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April 5, 2017

Mitch Greenlick, Chairman
House Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB. 2645 -5 Amendments — Drug Take-Back Program

Dear Chairman Greenlick and Members of the Committee:

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) strongly supports the State of Oregon's proposed legislation (HB. 2645 -5 Amendments) to establish a statewide manufacturer financed and managed drug take-back program. This bill would establish proper disposal options for unwanted and expired pharmaceuticals—both controlled and non-controlled substances—providing residents with a convenient way to safely dispose of unused medications.

Mounting evidence demonstrates the need for secure medication disposal options that match the convenience of purchasing them. Pharmaceuticals improperly stored in the home or disposed in the trash may end up in the hands of children, teenagers, and potential abusers. A lack of safe disposal options contributes to the national drug abuse epidemic that is now the leading cause of injury death in the U.S., ahead of car accidents. Moreover, when flushed or thrown away, pharmaceuticals end up in waterways, harming the ecosystem and potentially affecting sources of drinking water.

Producer-funded drug take-back programs save government and taxpayers money, fairly incorporate the true cost of managing these products in the purchase price, and provide a direct financial incentive for pharmaceutical companies to reduce unnecessary prescriptions. This funding mechanism is a key element to the sustainability and success of these programs.

Drug take-back programs are considered the safest, most effective drug disposal solution by Oregon state and local government agencies – including the [Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program](#), the [Oregon Department of Environmental Quality](#), [Association of Oregon Counties](#), and the [Oregon Health Authority](#). Unfortunately, the pharmaceutical industry continues to heavily promote trash disposal, a discrepancy that leads to public confusion and misinformation. Passing HB. 2645 -5 Amendments would ensure that the industry promotes the safest solution in Oregon.

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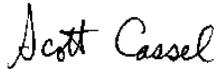
In the U.S., sixteen local governments and two states (Massachusetts and Vermont) have already passed such drug stewardship laws around the country, and many other state and local governments are considering similar legislation. Oregon has the chance to stand among these leaders by taking this important step to address the opioid epidemic, accidental overdoses, and aquatic contamination.

PSI is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. We have 47 state government agency members and hundreds of local government agency members nationwide. PSI also has formal partnerships with 110 businesses, organizations, academic institutions, and non-U.S. governments. Our organization has been working on the issue of safe drug disposal for over a decade, including helping to change the federal Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 and subsequent Drug Enforcement Administration regulations in 2014, which has allowed retail pharmacies to become authorized collectors of controlled substances. These changes made dropping off leftover drugs significantly more convenient, which is a key factor in increasing collection through drug take-back programs.

We commend you for addressing the state's drug abuse epidemic and protecting the environment by introducing HB. 2645 -5 amendments, which contain all of the key elements of a strong drug take-back bill.

Thank you for your strong leadership on this important issue.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Cassel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Scott Cassel
CEO/Founder